

Smuggling of gold biscuits by Staff

1718. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Airlines staffer smuggled gold biscuits from Sharjah in the last week of June of flight IC-882;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the stern action proposed to get rid of such anti-national elements in Government Company, immediately?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It has been reported by Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, New Delhi that on 27th June, 2000 Shri Vasudev Prasad, Foreman, Staff No. 278866 retrieved a packet containing 44 gold biscuits of 10 tolas each totally weighting 5.130 kgs. from one of the rear toilets of aircraft which operated flight IC-882 (Sharjah- Delhi) in the morning of 27th June, 2000 while the aircraft was parked at domestic airport after operating its international flight. Subsequently, Shri Vasudev Prasad handed over these biscuits to an outsider. On further interrogation the officers of Directorate of Revenue Intelligence recovered another packet containing 44 gold biscuits concealed in the rear toilet of the said aircraft. Shri Vasudev Prasad was arrested by Directorate of Revenue Intelligence and is in judicial custody.

(c) Shri Vasudev Prasad has been placed under suspension by the Competent Authority with effect from 27th June, 2000. Disciplinary proceedings are being initiated against him.

Air Bus Service between Delhi and Bhubaneshwar

1719. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any request from Government of Orissa for Air Bus Service from Delhi to Bhubaneshwar and *vice-versa*;

(b) if so, whether the Air Bus Service has been provided;

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(c) if so, from which date and whether it is daily; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) Indian Airlines has commenced operation of thrice weekly A-320 service on Delhi- Bhubaneshwar-Delhi route with effect from 15th July, 2000. Due to non-availability of spare A-320 aircraft capacity, it is not possible to provide a daily A-320 service on Delhi-Bhubaneshwar-Delhi route at present.

Airports near residential areas

†1720. SHRIMATI SAROJ DUBEY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken a decision to construct those airports which are situated near residential areas in the far away places in view of the air crash occurred near Patna Airport;

(b) if so, the number of such airports togetherwith the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) In case of many old airports, residential areas have developed nearby over a long period. However, necessary rules relating height restriction etc. are enforced in giving 'No objection' to such development so that safety of civil aviation operations is ensured. As such, there is no danger to civil aviation operations in such airports. Therefore, there is no plan to shift such existing airports to far away places.

Investment in Air India by foreign airlines

†1721. SHRI VIJAY SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that foreign airlines have been allowed to invest in Air India;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.